

Message Text

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PAGE 01 RANGOO 00539 181019Z

14

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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R 180930Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1001

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

CINCPAC HI

DEA BANGKOK UNN

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK UNN

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU UNN

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI UNN

AMCONSUL MANDALAY UNN

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI UNN

USLO PEKING UNN

AMCONSUL UDORN UNN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT PFOR BM

SUBJ: JOINT WEEKA #7

1. UNION DAY CELEBRATION (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

FEBRUARY 12 CELEBRATION OF UNION DAY FEATURED MASS RALLY IN RANGOON (100,00 ATTENDING ACCORDING TO PRESS) WHICH HEARD MESSAGE FROM NE WIN AND SPEECH BY BSPP SECRETARY-GENERAL SAN YU. STRESS THIS YEAR LAID ON ECONOMIC MATTERS WITH CALL FOR WORKERS AND MANAGERS TO IMPROVE THEIR PERFORMANCE. PRESS PICKED UP SOME LINE, LAUDING "POLITICAL AND MILITARY VICTORIES" OF THE GUB, BUT WARNING THAT DETERIORATING ECONOMIC CONDITIONS "IN THE LONG RUN WILL LEAD TO DISASTROUS CONSEQUENCES IN AND MILITARY AND POLITICAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 RANGOO 00539 181019Z

FIELD AS WELL." AS USUAL, NO CHANGES IN ECONOMIC STRUCTURE WERE

SUGGESTED; POPULACE SIMPLY URGED TO "THINK SOCIALISM" AND TRY HARDER. COMMENT: RALLY WAS APPARENTLY UNMARKED BY INCIDENTS ALTHOUGH THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT GUB MAY HAVE DETAINED SOME PPP TERRORISTS SENT IN TO DISRUPT PROCEEDINGS.

2. U.S. INDEPENDENCE DAY PARTY (UNCLASSIFIED)

AMBASSADOR'S INDEPENDENCE DAY RECEPTION FEBRUARY 16, (CELEBRATED HERE ON WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY HOLIDAY BECAUSE OF MONSOON WEATHER IN JULY) DREW A VERY HIGH RATE OF ATTENDANCE FOR SUCH AFFAIRS IN BURMA. PROMINANT AMONG THE BURMESE OFFICIALS WAS FOREIGN MINISTER U HLA PHONE WHO ALMOST NEVER GOES TO NATIONAL DAY FUNCTIONS, SENDING DEPUTY MINISTER U WIN INSTEAD. CROWD OF ALMOST 500 GATHERED ON RESIDENCE LAWN WITH LARGE AMERICAN FLAG AND "1776" DONE IN LIGHT BULBS IN BACKGROUND. NOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS ON BICENTENNIAL RECEIVED FROM MANY MISSIONS; INCLUDING VIRTUALLY ALL EUROPEAN COMMUNIST STATES, BUT NOT FROM THE PRC.

3. PEARL SALES AT 1976 GEM EMPORIUM (UNCLASSIFIED)

PEARL SALES AT THE 1976 GEM EMPORIUM GENERATED A RECORD TWO MILLION DOLLARS IN FOREIGN EXCHANGE FOR THE GUB COMPARED WITH \$1.1 MILLION LAST YEAR. THESE RECORD RECEIPTS WERE APPARENTLY DUE TO SEVERAL UNRELATED FACTORS. LOWER FLOOR PRICES STIMULATED MORE COMPETATIVE BIDDING THAN LAST YEAR. MANY MORE SMALLER DEALERS, PARTICULARLY JAPANESE, APPEARED THIS YEAR AND THEIR INEXPERIENCE MAY HAVE DRIVEN UP PRICES. OPTIMISM ABOUT THE WORLD ECONOMY INCREASED THE BUYERS' CONFIDENCE THAT THEY CAN RETAIL THEIR PURCHASES. THE SALE WAS SO SUCCESSFUL THAT THE GUB HAS MADE QUIET OVERTURES TO SOME BUYERS ABOUT ANOTHER GEM SALE IN NOVEMBER. SALES OF GEMS AND JADE HAVE NOT YET BEGUN, BUR BUYERS REPORTED THESE LOTS APPEAR TO BE OF LOWER QUALITY THAN PAST YEARS. IMPORTANCE GUB ATTACHES TO EMPORIUM AS FOREIGN EXCHANGE EARNER UNDERLINED BY PRESIDENT NE WIN'S APPEARANCE THERE TWO TIMES; HE DID NOT ATTEND LAST YEAR'S SALES.

4. GAS BLOWOUT AT MYANAUNG OILFIELD (UNCLASSIFIED)

OIL WELL AT MYANAUNG EXPLODED UNDER HEAVY PRESSURE ON FEBRUARY 8 TOPPLING DRILLING RIG AND SPRAYING GAS OVER WIDE AREA. DRILLING WHICH HAD COMMENCED IN EARLY JANUARY REACHED DEPTH OF ABOUT 2,600 LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 RANGOO 00539 181019Z

FEET WHEN HIGH PRESSURE NATURAL GAS CAUSED BLOWOUT. JETS OF MUD AND GAS ERUPTED AS HIGH AS 100 FEET. THE ERUPTION WAS CONTAINED ON FEBRUARY 10. ACCORDING TO GUB ACCOUNTS, THIS IS FIRST SUCH EXPLOSION IN BURMA'S INLAND PETROLEUM FIELDS.

5. ITU AND WHO OFFICIALS VISIT BURMA (UNCLASSIFIED)

ITU SECRETARY-GENERAL, MR. M. MILI AND WHO DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DR.

HALFDAN MAHLER, WERE IN RANGOON DURING PAST WEEK ON SEPARATE VISITS.
BOTH OFFICIALS MET WITH GUB MINISTERS AND HIGH-LEVEL OFFICERS IN
THEIR RESPECTIVE FIELDS, AND MR. MILI PAID A COURTESY CALL ON
PRIMIN U SEIN WIN. DR. MALHER WHO WAS ACCOMPANIED BY THE WHO
REGIONAL DIRECTOR CONDUCTED A SEMINAR FOR WHO PERSONNEL IN BURMA.
BOTH VISITS WERE OF ROUTINE NATURE AND NO NEW HEALTH OR COMMUNICA-
TIONS PROGRAMS FOR BURMA ARE EXPECTED.
OSBORN

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